

Unemployment Insurance Act, 1971

should all pay towards the plan and not "stick" one or two groups with a large part of the burden. I do not think that is fair.

Then, it is not clear just who is a teacher under the act. I hope the minister will clarify this in his remarks. Apparently "teacher" does not include a university professor. A teacher apparently is one who teaches in a public school or in a high school. That, Mr. Speaker, does not make much sense to me. If a teacher teaches Grade 13 in a high school, he is caught in the new scheme. But if he teaches Grade 13 in a university, and some universities have the equivalent of Grade 13, he is not caught in the scheme. Then, what is the position of these other quasi-universities or colleges as they are known in Ontario, where specialized courses are taught for a couple of years? I am referring to places such as Fanshawe College and Scarborough College in Toronto, as well as other colleges. Are they to be included? I hope that the minister will clarify for us who is to be caught. In other words, when is a teacher a professor and when is he a teacher? I think that some pretty arbitrary lines will have to be drawn, and I hope that the minister will clarify the matter.

Then, we must consider the practical question of how the payment of premiums is to be enforced against the teachers. As I understand it, in the province of Newfoundland teachers are employed directly by the provincial government. That will mean that the provincial government of Newfoundland will have to pay contributions to the scheme. If the government agrees to this there will be no difficulty. Then you come to the province of Ontario, where I come from, where the arrangement is somewhat different. There, we have regional school boards. These, of course, are emanations of the provincial governments or creatures of the province as they are sometimes called in rather unflattering terms. I do not see how, under the constitution, the school boards in Ontario can be made to pay contributions into the scheme unless the provincial government consents. That, of course, is different. Otherwise, there is no way that I know of by which school boards can be made to pay contributions into the scheme, anymore than municipalities can force the federal government to pay municipal taxes on federal buildings. We know that, for practical purposes, grants in aid are made available. However, unless the provinces consent, there is no way in which this provision can be enforced. I hope that the minister will cast a little light on that aspect when he answers some of our questions.

One of the problems that the provinces will have to consider, with the limited tax possibilities at their disposal after the big federal tax grabs over the years, is this: if they agree that school boards are to make these contributions, how are these to be financed? You know, Mr. Speaker, exactly who will pay these contributions. It will be the property taxpayers of the municipalities. The contributions will be passed on to them, and that will add to our current inflationary difficulties. Perhaps the minister will make some comment about that.

That is about all I wish to deal with at present. We hope that the minister, either at this stage of the bill or

[Mr. Nesbitt.]

in the committee stage, will answer some of the questions we have asked about some of these matters. We do not want to vote for a bill or give it our unqualified support unless we know what it is to do or what the answers will be to some of our questions. We look forward with interest to some of the minister's answers.

Mr. Craig Stewart (Marquette): Mr. Speaker, after having studied in detail Bill C-229, and after having considered the various representations thereon which I have received from employers and employees who will be affected by its provisions, I am greatly concerned over its inevitable intrusion into the area of municipal taxation. This bill proposes to include municipal employees, teachers, nurses, hospital workers and others whose earnings are either directly or indirectly paid from taxes raised on real property. I am told by school boards in my riding that projections show a one mill increase in property taxes to cover their share of this plan. At a time when the government seems to be so vitally concerned with preventing a second round of inflationary pressures on our economy, I cannot understand why it proposes to include, against their clear wishes, employers and employees in a scheme which is neither needed nor sought by either, and which can only result in substantial additional costs being passed down the line inevitably to the individual property owner.

With the exception of professional athletes, Mr. Speaker, whose proposed inclusion in this act borders on the ridiculous, the other proposed entrants are engaged in occupations which have the highest stability rates of all occupations in the country. These people and I, feel that the government is imposing a selective and discriminatory new form of taxation on them to provide increased benefits both in time and in payments to those people who are engaged in occupations which make them the real beneficiaries of this act. If this is a genuine insurance scheme, then let it operate as such. Let those people who have most to benefit by it, pay premiums accordingly. Let it not be used to implement a policy which is basically dishonest, whereby the government attempts to rationalize bringing under the protection of the Unemployment Insurance Act employees in Canada who least need and who least desire compulsory protection.

● (4:10 p.m.)

One of the bodies from which I received a representation opposing this bill was the Manitoba Association of Schools Trustees. They said, and I quote:

Our most serious objection to the proposed contribution by school boards is that it would be paid out of money raised entirely by taxation on local property, a source which is already severely overburdened and in dire need of assistance from senior governments. We recognize the constitutional problems which over the years have given federal governments some difficulty in doing what they would like to have done in support of education, but to invade our already inadequate source of revenue would be a most damaging blow to local governments and one which, we sincerely believe, could not really be intended by our national government.

Let there be no doubt in the minds of hon. members that it is not only employers who are opposed to this